

God and Prayer

God's Relationship to Prayer

Part of the mystery of how prayer works is related to the fact that God interacts with us in *two different ways at the same time*.

God relates to us on a person-to-person level. When we pray, he takes delight in us and in our desire to talk to him. He knows our hearts (because of his interaction with us as the Creator), so he knows when our prayer is genuine; and he delights in our expression of love.

At the same time, he interacts with us as the Creator over his creation. From this perspective, he knows and understands all things. So when we pray, he is not surprised by anything we might say. It is *impossible* for us to inform God of something he knows nothing about!

Some people, wrongly interpreting the concept of God's sovereignty, take their eyes off the person-to-person relationship, and ask, "If God already knows everything, why pray?" They need to learn that *both* perspectives always work together. From the "person-to-person" perspective, God uses prayer to accomplish his purposes. We may not always know *how* he does this, but from the "sovereignty" perspective, he has *guaranteed* that it will happen.

One of God's purposes, which he has told us about, is the *fact* that he is going to use all things to accomplish good in the lives of those who love him (Romans 8:28). This promise is connected to our prayers (v. 26-27), and the sovereign God has guaranteed he will do it. Nothing can stand in his way!

How should we respond to all this? God has given us the opportunity to participate, through prayer, in what he plans to accomplish in the world, and in our own lives. Who would be such a *fool* as to *not* want to use such an opportunity to be involved in such a great matter?